

IN RECOGNITION OF JIM
KEATHLEY

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 15, 2010

Mr. SKELTON. Madam Speaker, it has come to my attention that Jim Keathley, the superintendent of the Missouri Highway Patrol, will be retiring on March 1, 2010. After exactly 33 years of service with the highway patrol, Mr. Keathley's impressive career will come to a close.

The people of Missouri have benefited greatly from the 3 years he has served as superintendent, a job he enjoys immensely. Among his most notable achievements is a reduction in traffic deaths to levels not seen since 1950. This impressive accomplishment is due in no small part to his vigilant focus on highway safety.

For more than three decades, Mr. Keathley has put his life on the line for the safety of my fellow Missourians. Now, his sons follow this proud tradition as state troopers themselves. Missouri is a better place due to the proud service of Mr. Keathley and his sons.

Madam Speaker, it is with great honor that I wish the very best for Mr. Keathley as he begins a new chapter in his life. I trust that my fellow members of the House will join me in thanking him for his service to the people of Missouri.

HONORING GARY SEVERSON

HON. JOHN T. SALAZAR

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 15, 2010

Mr. SALAZAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the work and legacy of Gary Severson, who for the past 11 years has admirably served as Executive Director of the Northwest Colorado Council of Governments (NWCCOG).

Mr. Severson has led the council with an openness and team spirit that has allowed for effective management, while developing partnerships among the city and county entities he served. Under his leadership, the NWCCOG has emerged as a viable cohort and has grown as a respected and valued resource in addressing regional issues. As a result, the Council's guidance has been sought by elected officials from Colorado to Washington, DC.

Under Mr. Severson, the NWCCOG has taken responsibility for many complex federal and state projects with significant impact on programs including Weatherization, All-Hazards Emergency Management and Elevator Inspection Programs. The influence of his leadership has been particularly profound in protection of federal lands within the confines of the NWCCOG region.

With more than 68 percent of the NWCCOG region being managed by federal agencies, his stewardship and insight have helped grow the Council into a recognized leader in National Forest Planning, Community Wildfire Protection Planning and mitigating the detrimental effects of bark beetle infestation. Such efforts have led to many accolades, including receipt of the prestigious USDA Rural Leadership Award.

The future is bright for the region as the NWCCOG explores ways to expand on an economic base of recreation and construction. Mr. Severson's vision includes the possibilities of a sustainable wood products industry, enhancing higher education and upgrading medical services. He has truly left a lasting legacy of accomplishment.

Madam Speaker, I proudly acknowledge the work and leadership of Gary Severson and extend to him the gratitude of the 28 member jurisdictions of NWCCOG for his 11 years as Executive Director. I wish him continued success in his future endeavors.

**HONORING THE DEATH OF LAHORI
RAM**

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 15, 2010

Mr. GARAMENDI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the one year passing of Lahori Ram. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the outstanding achievements of Lahori during his lifetime.

Lahori Ram served with a strong vision and dedication to the local community and California. From the day he emigrated from India to this great nation in 1972, Lahori embraced the notion that in America, hard work and sacrifice has limitless possibilities. He lived his American Dream, and his lasting legacy of philanthropy, community leadership, and political activism will be with us for generations to come.

As a 28-year-old graduate student, Lahori Ram worked in farm fields in Fresno for 75 cents an hour to help pay for a master's degree in Foreign Affairs from Yuba College. In 1976, he started a career with the United States Postal Service, where he worked an average of 55 to 60 hours per week, including most holidays, before retiring 18 years later in 1994.

Lahori Ram's hard work allowed him to buy his first family home in San Bruno in 1979, and with uncanny investment ability he sold that home in 1984, and eventually came to own over 100 apartment units in the bay area. With his success, after retirement, Lahori dedicated himself to philanthropy and to giving back to his community.

In 1981 Lahori Ram helped establish the Sri Guru Ravidass Sabha Temple in Pittsburg, generously donated to charity, assisted many causes in India, and was a well-known figure in the Sikh and Hindu religious communities. He was appointed and served on the California Technology, Trade, and Commerce Committee; the California Transportation Commission; and the California Commission for Economic Development.

Madam Speaker, I am truly honored in joining many Californians to pay tribute to my friend and dedicated public servant, Lahori Ram.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 15, 2010

Mr. SHUSTER. Madam Speaker, on rollcall Nos. 2, 3, 4, and 5, I was not present. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 2, "yea" on rollcall No. 3, "yea" on rollcall No. 4, and "yea" on rollcall No. 5.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MIKE ROSS

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 15, 2010

Mr. ROSS. Madam Speaker, on Wednesday, January 13, 2010, I was not present for votes 4 and 5.

Had I been present for rollcall 4, supporting the initiatives of Chicago Wilderness and the Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights, I would have voted "yea."

Had I been present for rollcall 5, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 101 West Highway 64 Bypass in Roper, North Carolina, as the E.V. Wilkins Post Office, I would have voted "yea."

TRIBUTE TO ERIC BOTKIN

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 15, 2010

Mr. CALVERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of Eric Botkin, a retired firefighter paramedic and valued member of the community of Riverside, California. Riverside has been blessed by dynamic and dedicated leaders, like Eric, who willingly and unselfishly give their time and talent and make their communities a better place to live and work.

Eric Botkin began his career with the City of Riverside Fire Department on May 1, 1998. He held the position of firefighter paramedic until his retirement. During his career he performed as a fire investigator from February 18, 2000 through July 5, 2002. He completed Engine Certification on November 2, 2007. His last assignment was Fire Station 13 on Canyon Springs Blvd.

Prior to working for the City of Riverside Fire Department Eric was a paid/call firefighter with the Orange County Fire Authority. He also worked for Lifefleet Ambulance and Medtrans Ambulance before pursuing his fire department career.

Eric passed away at his Temecula home on December 27th surrounded by family and friends, including his wife, Hallie, and son, Hunter, 10, after battling glioblastoma multiforme, a form of brain cancer. Eric Botkin was diagnosed in October of 2007 and retired from the fire department on October 30, 2008. For the past two years Eric remained upbeat and was an inspiration to all.

On behalf of all those who knew him, it is my honor to offer these remarks as a tribute to the life and legacy of Riverside Firefighter